Basic Concepts in Biosynthesis

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Abstract

This article was written as an account about Biosynthesis, a method which is active in more than three continents, asked by the World Council for Psychotherapy. It includes information on the content of the method and also on format and organizational aspects of the Training. It was first published as "Biosynthesis" by Silvia Specht Boadella and David Boadella in the book Globalised Psychotherapy, edited by Alfred Pritz, Facultas Universitätsverlag, Vienna 2000.

The word "Biosynthesis" means "integration of life". Biosynthesis works with self-formation processes, which encourage organic growth, personal development and spiritual integrity. The objective of our work is to forge a link between the three essential aspects of human existence:

- Somatic, or body existence
- Psychological experience and
- Spiritual essence.

When we work with the body in the context of Biosynthesis, we draw on the principles of embryology. We aim to integrate breathing patterns, muscle tone and the expression of emotion, in other words to harmonise them so that they flow together as a whole.
The methods of Biosynthesis are oriented around the principles of organic growth. Biosynthesis works with movements such as the wave forms of rhythmic breathing, to release inhibited intentionality and stimulate new embodiments of the psyche.

When we work with the psyche, the aim is to integrate feeling, thinking and acting. These are the three most important factors that form and shape an individual. They exert a constant interactive influence on each other, and also constantly influence the dynamic shape flow of the body. Biosynthesis also relates to the human potential hidden within trauma, as well as the function of somatic resonance and interpersonal presence.

The spiritual foundation of Biosynthesis emphasises the central aspect of empathy - for oneself as well as for others. It is based on the idea that the qualities of our essence need to be "grounded" in everyday reality. Biosynthesis is a process-orientated path of development, which recognises the individual as unique and multidimensional, and acknowledges that the individual possesses a broad spectrum of development potential.

In Biosynthesis, we use our somatic, depth psychological and transpersonal understanding to perceive the intentional language of an

individual in an intuitive way, without imposing norms or making interpretations as to what and how a person should be.

Biosynthesis encompasses ten main themes and the corresponding theories, methods and practices for each:

Centering means to deal with personal values and personal identities. This covers the somatic, psychological and spiritual identity of an individual. The fundamental question in this context is "Who am I?"

Facing means the interaction between internal and external goals. In this case the question is "Where am I going?"

Grounding means the development of effective life management strategies, appropriate levels of assertiveness, efficient and compassionate behaviour. The question is "How do I get there?"

Holding concerns the principles of personal boundaries, self-preservation, and security, which in this context refers to the individual and social surroundings. The question is "Whom and what can I trust?"

Bonding aims to encourage contact with others, intersubjectivity, verbal and non-verbal interchange. The question is: "Who can I communicate with and how can I improve my contacts?"

Bounding covers understanding, recognition, or negotiating of one's own or other's boundaries and borders, both private and public, personal and social. Social conflicts often occur for instance as a result of ambiguities when drawing up territorial boundaries. The question is "What and where are my boundaries and how can I approach conflict in a constructive way?"

Charging offers opportunities to release personal energy from a static or stagnant situation, to arouse vitality and nourish creativity. Question: "Where and what are my sources of strength, and how can I improve the uptake, circulation and output of my energy?"

Sounding links our language with the depths of experience and encourages the ability to listen to others empathetically and to communicate effectively. For this, you must be good at self-reflection, observing inner monologues and mental patterns. The question is "How do I communicate?"

Shaping means finding and developing skills, work opportunities, competence, meaningful and practical areas of application for them, and organisational structures. Question: "How can I turn my dreams into reality?"

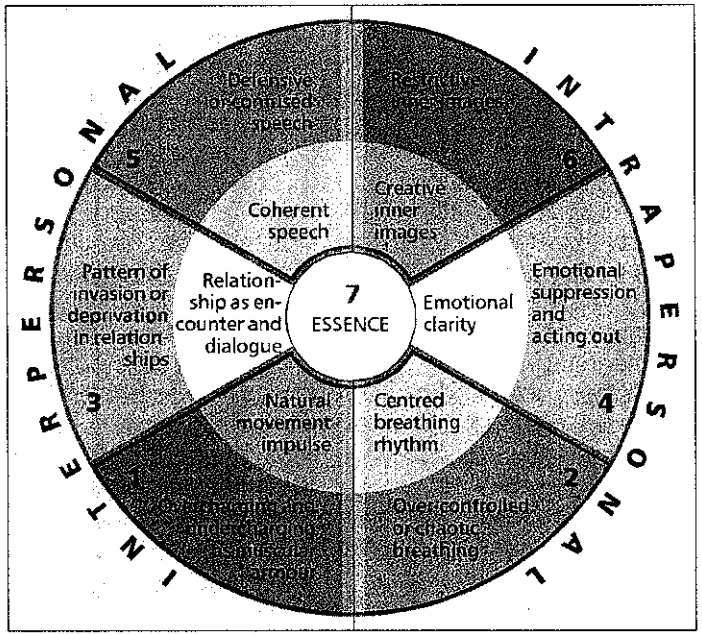
Valuing aims for an increased perception of our eco-social environment and an embodied understanding of the roots of our human existence in nature, our effect on the world. Question: "What values do I have and how can I behave ethically?"

Biosynthesis addresses the fundamental needs of every individual with respect to physical well-being, psychological experience and spiritual development.

Biosynthesis - a somatic and depth-psychological psychotherapy

Just as the word Biosynthesis means „integration of life", so the word psychotherapy comes from the Greek meaning "to heal the soul". Biosynthesis as a form of psychotherapy encompasses a multi-dimensional perspective of the person. It incorporates different life fields experience and expression. These life fields are manifest in two different forms, as a closed system and as an open system within a person. Closed systems cause character problems, physical inhibitions and spiritual contractions. Open systems reflect psychic contact, energetic vitality and a link with the qualities of the heart.

The life fields shown in the following diagram lead us to seven basic therapeutic working areas and to a broad spectrum of working methods:



Each of the six external segments of the diagram describes a life field. The closed position is in the outside circle, and the open one in the middle circle. The middle circle is closely linked with the centre, which represents the essence of an individual. The art of Biosynthesis therapy involves overcoming the inhibitions in the external circle, starting with the most easily accessible segment, with the aim of reaching the inner circle where the segments are more strongly linked together, and then reaching the centre from there. This results in 7 different areas of work:

1. Affecto-motoric work with muscle tone and movement
2. Energetic work on external and internal breathing rhythms

3. Systemic work on behaviour in relationships
4. Psycho-energetic work on the spectrum of holding and releasing emotions
5. Psycho-dynamic work with speech to eliminate communication problems
6. Transformative work on restrictive ideas and images that limit our visions
7. Transpersonal development by using somatic meditation to link up with the voice of the heart

Viewed horizontally three zones are apparent:

- A lower zone of connection (somatic-energetic links: 1+2)
- A central zone of contact (channels of relationship and emotional expression: 3+4)
- An upper zone of context (verbal and visual forms of experience: 5+6)

If we divide the diagram vertically, we can distinguish between the left-hand segments which are more interpersonal, and the intrapersonal right-hand segments. Of course both sides have a mutual influence over each other, and both surround a transpersonal core self.

If we work with this core self or essence, we are frequently dealing with very subtle energetic experiences. We want to come nearer to the processes and qualities of the essential core. They are the sources of inner strength and nourishment. They are the starting points of physical, psychological and spiritual healing. There are basically three "ways" of reaching them, which should ultimately flow together:

1. The "way of the belly" takes us through a deep emotional cleansing and purification process (transmutation).
2. The "way of the heart" teaches us to express our innermost qualities in our daily life (transformation).
3. The "way of awareness" allows our sense of self-identification to become less rigid and more permeable, so that we can live and experience in a more spontaneous and less restricted way (transcendence).

Since polarity is a central concept in Biosynthesis, what is helpful for one person could damage another. Because of this, the therapist has a whole spectrum of polarities from which to choose an approach, and he or she is guided by the reactions of the client as to which polarity he/she should give priority to at a particular time.

The principal polarities are:

- Internal work versus external work (experience or expression);

- Rising or falling energy levels (e.g. standing or lying, lightness or gravity, light focus or earth focus);
- Active leading versus receptive following;
- Regressive or progressive orientation (immersion into or emergence out of past events);
- Interaction between verbal and non-verbal communication.

Biosynthesis has been researched and developed over the past 40 years by David Boadella; it continues to be developed today in theory and a wide range of practical applications by Silvia Specht Boadella and David Boadella, as well as leading members of the "International Training Faculty of Biosynthesis".

In many respects Biosynthesis is based on the energetic theories of Wilhelm Reich, and the discoveries made by Francis Mott and Frank Lake about prenatal and perinatal processes. It has also been heavily influenced by Stanley Keleman's research into the formative process and emotional anatomy.

The scientific concept is based on the discoveries of the quantum physicist David Bohm on soma significance, and of the biologist Rupert Sheldrake on morphogenetic fields.

The spiritual basis of Biosynthesis is oriented on the discoveries and works of Robert Moore with regard to the integration of psyche and soma - in particular his work with essential qualities and his research into the anatomy and circulation of subtle energy. Bio-communication was developed within Biosynthesis from these areas of knowledge.

Biosynthesis is a holistic method and includes a broad spectrum of working approaches. Biosynthesis creates a bridge between natural science and human sciences, by connecting the realms of pre- and perinatal psychology, somatic and depth-psychologically oriented psychotherapy, somatic therapy, and transpersonal psychology.

More information on the International Foundation for Biosynthesis IFB and its work are given on our Website or at the International Institute for Biosynthesis IIBS: Benzenrüti 6, CH-9410 Heiden/Switzerland.
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Biography

David Boadella (born 1931), B.A., M.Ed., D.Sc.hon, Psychotherapist SPV, UKCP and ECP. Studied education, literature and psychology. Trained in character-analytic vegetotherapy. Founder of Biosynthesis. He has spent many years in psychotherapeutic practice. He holds lectures worldwide, and is the author of numerous books and articles. He has been publishing the journal "Energy & Character" since 1970. In 1995 he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the "Open International University of Complementary Medicine". A selection of David Boadella's books: "Befreite Lebensenergie / Lifestreams" (Kösel / Routledge), "Wilhelm Reich: The evolution of his work" (Arkana).

Silvia Specht Boadella (born 1948), Ph.D., Psychotherapist SPV and ECP. Studied philosophy, literature, art history and psychology. Trained in Biosynthesis. Since 1985 she has undergone ongoing further training in "Psychosomatic Centering" (Robert Moore, Denmark). She spent four years lecturing at the University of Kanazawa (Japan). There she dealt intensively with Zen Buddhism and trained in Buto dance with Kazuo Ohno. Since 1985 she has had a psychotherapeutic practice for individual and group therapy. Since 1986 she has been a Biosynthesis trainer at an international level and director of the IIBS. She has published a book: "Erinnerung als Veränderung" (Memory as Change) (Mäander).

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